Import of Milk Powder

2338. SHRI E. BALANANDAN: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government decided to import 10,000 M. Tons of powder milk at zero import duty;

(b) whether the Indian Dairy Association, the largest milk producing organisation in the country has protested against such a move;

(c) whether such a move will not jeopardise the near self-sufficient status of India in milk production and render the Operation Flood meaningless; and

(d) whether Bangladesh and other developing countries are still continuing with a high level of import duty and India will be put at disadvantage because of such move;

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI NITISH KUMAR): (a) The tariff rate of duty on milk powder is bound at Nil and therefore, the import of milk powder does not attract any custom duty, irrespective of the quantity of imports.

(b) and (c) The Indian Dairy Association had submitted that the zero import duty on some of the milk products needs to be reviewed so that the growth prospect of the Indian dairy sector are not jeopardised.

(d) Bangladesh presently levies import duty of 62% on milk powder. The Government is in the process of negotiations with the concerned trading partners for enhancement of tariff binding on milk powder.

Co-operative project in NE States

2339. SHRI W. ANGOU SINGH: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any new cooperative project which are to be introduced in the States by NCDC;